MODERN QUALITY.

AN

EPISTLE

TO

Miſs *M*——*W*——

ON

Her LATE ACQUIRED Honour.

FROM

A Lady of REAL QUALITY.

Mark by what wretched Steps their Glory grows;
From Dirt and Sea-weed, as proud Venice *roſe.* POPE.

The SECOND EDITION, with ADDITIONS.

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Modern Quality.

SHALL *Britiſh* Honour be inſulted ſo,
And Ladies not their juſt Reſentment ſhow?
All other Ills we can with Eaſe endure;
But Loſs of juſt *Precedence* nought can cure.
Think not, *M--r--a*, Pow'r can e'er create,
Where Birth is wanting, *a Degree of State*;
Tho' with the gaudieſt Titles tinſel'd o'er,
We ſtill ſhall look upon you as before:
Strip the gay borrow'd Gewgaws from your Side,
And with juſt Scorn the ſpurious Pomp deride.
The *Prude* neglects her Pray'rs, to Heaven due,
Rather than yield to thee the *foremoſt Pue*.
Taunts of all Kinds from ev'ry Rank you'll meet;
From *Dutcheſſes* en-chair'd, to *Mob i' th' Street*.
The gay Coquette, piqu'd to the very Heart,
Will ſtill be whiſpering ſome Jeſt that's ſmart;
And in the Circle of her Friends relate
Thy Tale, and all thy vain Pretence to State;
Or when thy Equipage is paſſing by,
The envious Nymph will caſt a ſcornful Eye,
And is that Skirra's Daughter? ſneering cry.

Unmov'd we ſaw our humble Peers ſubmit,
Beneath thy vain, thy boaſting Sire to ſit ;
Let them their highly honour'd Trophies yield
To all who riſe in Fraud and Cunning skill'd ;
Let the mean D---e in ſupple Cringes bend,
And ev'ry L---d from his due Rank deſcend ;
Let the R---t R----nds bow their M---res low'r
To the new E---l, than to their G--d before :
All this with Smiles we view, and learn to ſcorn
The grovling P---r, tho' e'er ſo highly born.
What now avails it for his learned G---ce,
His Pedigree whole Ages back to trace ?
What tho' from a *right noble* Stock he came,
Which, e'er the Conqueſt, fill'd the Trump of Fame ;
Whoſe Virtues have, with equal Greatneſs, run
Unſtain'd, unblemiſh'd, on from Son to Son :
'Tis needleſs all---- Honours were once beſtow'd
On Merit only, ---- now on all the Crowd ;
When Virtue's high Rewards are made the Price
To purchaſe falſe Reſpect, and gild o'er Vice,
Howe'er the World's deceiv'd, no Praiſe they claim ;
The Honour's *Infamy*, the Title's *Shame* :
When P--t--nts are mere Children's Play-things made,
And Heraldry becomes a petty Trade,
Unthinking Fops may ſmile——the *truly Great*
Will ſcorn the ſullied *St--r* and *C--ro--t*.

Is there a L——d whoſe Breaſt with Ardour glows;
Who all his Country's bleeding Inj'ries knows;
Yet *patient* ſees the Wretch his Seat aſſume,
Whoſe only Merit's ſigning *England*'s Doom?
Look on your ſacred Walls; each figur'd Chief
Seems rap'd with Rage, or loſt in ſilent Grief.
Methinks I hear Great DRAKE or RALEIGH ſay,
" Were thus ELIZA's *Honours* thrown away?
" Had ye the *antient Spirit* of your Race,
" Ye'd fly the H——e, as an *infectious Place.*
But Crimes ſucceſsful have their Nature loſt,
Once juſtly puniſh'd, now they're valued moſt;
Would you the Honours of this Land obtain,
High Places, Poſts, and mighty Penſions gain,
Shun all that's *Good*, be *Truth*'s obdurate Foe;
Fly *Conſcience*, *Honeſty* and *Shame* forego.
Corruption gains a Title and a Star,
While *Freedom* ſtarves in bleakeſt Northern Air.
Would you be *Upright*, *Juſt*, *Sincere* and *Wiſe*,
You'll be diſgrac'd——*A*——*le* the P--l--ce flies:
Ruin the Nation, if you wou'd be *Great:*
You ſee which way you will an E--ld--m get.
Some few there are to Native Virtue true,
Who ſcorn to join the proſtituted Crew.
The reſt are ſuch a mean and ſervile Herd,
They hail their Menials when they're once preferr'd.

Inveſt with courtly Robes a *Log of Wood*,
They'd own its Titles merited and good;
And are ſo wholly to all Honour loſt,
They'd make a Levee to revere the *Poſt*.

Tho' *Men* whoſe higher Souls Obedience claim,
Are ſunk ſo low in Infamy and Shame;
Yet know, vain Maid! the Noble *Britiſh* Fair
Still keep their Virtue, and their Honour, clear:
Like the chaſte *Ermine*, cautiouſly they tread,
And nought ſo much as fell Pollution dread;
The very Touch ſtrikes all their Senſes dead.
Who joins in Converſe with a ſpurious Train,
Imbibes their *Scandal*, and partakes their *Stain*;
Can the fair Ofspring of the Nuptial Band
With Illegitimates walk Hand in Hand?
If what the Law makes *baſe*, Pow'r can amend,
Uſeleſs are *Ties*, *Diſtinction's* at an End.
Like Manners may the *Slave* and *Lady* fit,
And Wh---s and Matrons may together ſit.
The Doctor's Art may gild th'envenom'd Pill,
It ſhines we ſee, but know 'tis Poiſon ſtill.
Put baſeſt *Lead* into the neateſt Mould,
The Royal Stamp can't make it *Standard Gold*.
Thus every Fair in Honour born and bred,
When plac'd near *Thee* is Gold alloy'd with *Lead*.

Thus

See in the crouded *Mall* they ſhun thy Sight,
True Splendor blinds thee with its dazling Light.
They, who in former Rank might yield a Smile
To chear thee, and thy hapleſs Fate beguile,
Now thus miſplac'd above thy *proper* Sphere,
At thy Approach think a Contagion near.
Will the chaſte Nymphs, who juſtly Def'rence claim,
Pay a *forc'd Rev'rence* to *Reward of Shame* ?
Not all thy Father's Honours, K--g's Command,
Can the *Reſentment* of the *Fair* withſtand.
Their ſcornful Sneers, where-e'er thy State they view,
Will, with reſiſtleſs Force, thy Steps purſue:
Can all the youthful Maids of high-born Blood,
Whoſe Pedigree the Teſt of Ages ſtood,
Rank with a *late ennobled ſpurious Blood* ?
Will *A----l*, *B---ce*, or *B---y*'s princely Line
With a falſe Iſſue of a Comm'ner join ?
When R---l Blood, debarr'd the nuptial Rites,
Does with Inferiors taſte Love's ſoft Delights,
His Dignity will palliate the Shame---
But Subjects and their K--- are not the ſame.
Higher than thine, what Mortal's Pride could ſoar ?
The B---- of a P--- could be no more.
By this thy Sire his evil Pow'r has ſhown,
And on all *England* laſting Odium thrown.

By

By former Acts the *Hate of Men* he drew,
And all *our Sex* h' has ſatiriz'd in *You.*
While Arts and Arms lay gaſping at his Feet,
He piqu'd the Fair, and made his Work compleat.
Had this not been ; when *Juſtice* ſhou'd purſue,
And for his *Errors* claim its Forfeit due ;
Or when the *injur'd Nation* ſhou'd attone,
By *rig'rous Puniſhment*, the Wrongs he'd done,
Our tender Hearts moſt certainly would melt,
And we Compaſſion for his *Fate* had felt ;
Now ſhe that ſees his End, and drops a *Tear*,
Will, in his Crimes, be deem'd to have a *Share* ;
Whene'er that *long-wiſh'd Day* of Wrath ſhall come,
Unpity'd, we ourſelves ſhall ſign his Doom,
With unrelenting Breaſts behold him die,
And not to grace his *Fall* one *weeping Eye.*

Yet ſtill Compaſſion warms the Female Breaſt ;
For thee, *M---a*, we are ſtill diſtreſt :
Unknowing, you receiv'd your hapleſs State,
Too *eminently* Low, too baſely *Great* ;
You were not conſcious of the *ſtol'n Embrace*,
Nor knew the Dangers that you were to face :
We pity you, the harmleſs Cauſe of Wrong !
On *him* your Vengeance wreak, ye Female Throng !
Thy Mother yielded to his wily Art,
And, ſpite of Reaſon, ſhe reſign'd her Heart.

Vainly

Vainly he ſought her Honour to reſtore,
For what's the *Tie* when Virtue is no more?
Oft' has her Senſe beguil'd her latent Wrong,
While Crouds, attentive, liſten'd to her Tongue:
Oft ſhe in moving Terms bewail'd the Time
That render'd you the *Product* of her Crime:
Tho' all her Eloquence and Wit you ſhare,
And Charms which ſcarcely will admit Compare;
Tho' amply bleſs'd with an exalted Soul,
Within thy Veins her richer Blood doth roll;
One Drop of his *contaminates the Whole.*

Say, what's the Cauſe?——where will his Projects end?
By theſe *new Honours* what doth he intend?
Where will inſatiable Ambition drive?
For what new Acquiſitions doth he ſtrive?
Is then his *Stem of Vice*, his *Honour*'s *Mock*,
To be engrafted on ſome Noble Stock?
What youthful Peer muſt as his Victim ſtoop?
Whom has he next mark'd out to be his *Dupe*?
What grand Alliance does he now propoſe
To aid his Cauſe, and guard him 'gainſt his Foes?
Does he, in Vanity, preſume to join
His Iſſue with the Seed of R——l Line?
His tow'ring Fancy needs muſt overlook
All titled Sons-in-Law, unleſs a D——:

Or doth he form a ſtill more noble Scheme,
And of a R——l W___ and C——ſs dream?
When Age to either *Luſt* or *Grandeur* turns,
Alike impatiently in both it burns:
One mad for *Honour* runs, and one for *Love*,
Tho' both from diff'rent Springs alike they move:
Pride's empty Trappings doating St___men chuſe,
Young Maids to *aged* Blood new Warmth infuſe.
When *Joab* halted, and could hardly ſee,
Then *Joab*, truly, would a *General* be:
When holy *David* was almoſt Fourſcore,
Cover'd with Sores, contracted long before,
A ſpotleſs Maid alone could eaſe his Pain,
Clasp'd in her Arms, he ſtrait grew young again.
May this not be *M*——'s wretched Caſe!
Condemn'd to feign, and meet a *cold* Embrace;
To wither and conſume in lambent Fires,
And doom'd to raiſe unquench'd tho' weak Deſires.
Some honeſt Youth of *middling Station* chuſe,
And to a *proper* Rank confine thy Views;
Shun *courtly Sneers*, thy *fancy'd Honours* quit,
In *rural* Manſions Happineſs you'll meet;
Ne'er be a tender, helpleſs Victim led
To ſome *old* Letcher's *rich*, but *joyleſs*, Bed;
Nor ſtake thy *Virtue*, to preſerve his *H*——.

A Female Pity will not let me chide;
We know, as well as you, the Force of Pride.
What Lady loves not *Title*, *Place*, and *State*,
To ſhine amidſt a Circle of the Great?
Honour bewitches, *Pomp* will ſoon perſuade
To any thing, the tender blooming Maid;
But then conſider, Fair! each Nymph, like you,
Grudges the Honours now become your Due,
And claims Precedence and Submiſſion too.
Right well old *Chaucer* judg'd, when, in ſhrew'd Tale,
He ſhew'd where Female Paſſion did prevail;
" Thus, ſaith the Knight, it is by Nature meant
" That every Female longs for Government."
Why would th' advent'rous Sire with us wage War?
'Twas puſhing his intrepid Front too far;
Man may be *brib'd*, or *coax'd*, to change his Mind;
Women are obſtinate, when they're inclin'd.
His Tribe of Sycophants then let him ſway;
Our Pow'r's deſpotic, and he muſt obey:
Sooner ſhall Contraries at once unite,
Than Women yield one Tittle of their Right.
Ye *Patriots* ceaſe your *Voice* 'gainſt *Fraud* to ſtretch!
Rapine has rais'd him high above your Reach:
For *Us* the mighty Task's reſerv'd alone
This foul Diſgrace, this Scandal on *Us* thrown,
Muſt, at the laſt, be center'd in his own.

From *Gauls* the *Roman Dames* their City ſav'd ;
Let *Britiſh Ladies* free their Land enſlav'd !
Form'd not for *Senates*, or the bloody Field,
Soft Blandiſhments are all the Arms we wield :
Ye *Heroines*, the bleſt Occaſion ſieze !
Urge all your Tears, ſoft Sighs and bending Knees.
Her Son may every fondling Mother guide !
Her eager L--d each roſy-blooming Bride !
Then, when ſoft Tranſports riſe, try ev'ry Charm,
To future Juſtice ev'ry Paſſion warm ;
Nor yield 'till Vict'ry and Triumph ſmile,
And give ye up the *Monſter* of our *Iſle* ;
'Till the Uſurper from his S——t is drove,
As Comets from the *ſtarry Hoſt* above :
Inſpir'd, when Beauty pleads, P——rs ſhall confeſs,
For injur'd Ladies they could do no leſs.
What not a *ravag'd* and a *ruin'd Land*
Could long *obtain*, wrong'd Women ſhall *command*,
The Victim's Trophies on high Columns rear !
And let their Baſes this Inſcription bear,
" The PLUND'RER whom learn'd SENATES cou'd not quell
„ A Sacrifice to FEMALE HONOUR fell."

F I N I S.